

centers, industry groups, and non-industry partners, to undertake manufacturing technology research. Manufacturing is a major source of high skill, high-paying jobs, and this bill will go far to reinvigorate our manufacturing sector.

One of the biggest stumbling blocks to innovation is the technology so-called "Valley of Death," the gap between angel funding and measurable venture capital, the lack of adequate private venture capital for early stage, high-risk, high-reward technology development. Almost 20 years ago, Congress created the Advance Technology Program, or ATP, to address this gap.

Today, the "Valley of Death" remains, but the global innovative environment has changed. H.R. 1868 responds to this by replacing ATP with the Technology Innovation Program, or TIP, which would provide limited, cost-shared grants to small and medium-size firms and joint venture to pursue high risk, high-reward technologies, with potential for broad public benefit.

TIP also acknowledges the vital role that universities play in the innovation cycle by allowing them to fully participate in TIP. H.R. 1868 is a bipartisan bill and incorporates good ideas from both sides of the aisle. It has been endorsed by TechNet, SEMI, the American Small Manufacturers Coalition, the Association of American Universities, the National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges, the Alliance for Science & Technology Research in America, whose members include the National Association of Manufacturers, the Business Software Alliance and the American Chemical Society. It also enjoys the support of dozens of other organizations, companies, and individuals.

I urge my colleagues to support this important legislation.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. EHLERS. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise today in support of H.R. 1868, the Technology Innovation Manufacturing and Stimulation Act of 2007.

I certainly want to thank the Chair of the subcommittee for working very, very closely with us in producing this fine bill.

This bill provides a 3-year authorization for the National Institute of Standards and Technology, familiarly called NIST. Since 1901, NIST scientists and engineers have worked directly with American industries to address their needs for measurement methods, tools, data and technology, the building blocks that allow industry to grow and prosper.

NIST is one of three agencies targeted by the President's American Competitiveness Initiative. The ACI aims to double the Federal investment in physical science and research over the next 10 years to ensure that America remains technologically competitive in the global context marketplace.

Yesterday this body passed an authorization bill for one of the other ACI agencies, the National Science Foundation. I am very pleased that today we are supporting a second ACI agency by authorizing NIST labs at a rate that would double the budget over the next 10 years.

H.R. 1868 is a bipartisan bill that incorporates recommendations from the administration for some of NIST's programs. However, earlier this week, the administration sent up a critical statement about H.R. 1868, and I want to clarify some misunderstanding that may have arisen from that statement.

H.R. 1868 does not underfund the NIST labs, contrary to the statement and the administration's comments. H.R. 1868 provides a 10 percent increase above fiscal year 2007 for the NIST labs and sets the NIST lab budget on a path to double over the next 10 years. This is entirely consistent with the President's overall stated goal for the American Competitiveness Initiative.

H.R. 1868 does not fund or subsidize management consulting services. H.R. 1868 fully funds the highly successful manufacturing extension partnership, better known as the MEP program.

MEP helps businesses improve manufacturing processes, reduce waste and train workers to use new equipment, which keeps high-paying manufacturing jobs here in the United States. This House has already twice passed this MEP authorization in both the 108th and 109th Congress.

Another comment, MEP receives one-third of its funding from the Federal Government, one-third from the States, one-third from fees charged to participating small manufacturers. MEP has over 350 manufacturing extension offices located in all 50 States and Puerto Rico.

H.R. 1868 creates the Technology Innovation Program based on recommendations from the administration. This bill is very clear that only small and medium-size companies can apply for Federal funding.

Universities partnering with this small company can apply for funding, actually expanding the role of university participation, not limiting it as the administration's letter suggests.

The program's sole goal is to accelerate the development and application of challenging high-risk, high-reward technologies in areas of critical national needs, thus, targeting major societal needs that the administration's letter asserts are not part of the bill.

H.R. 1868 authorizes an important investment in our Nation's future economic competitiveness. Mr. Chairman, I want to thank Chairman GORDON and Technology and Innovation Subcommittee Chairman WU for working with us on this important piece of legislation.

I also want to acknowledge the hard work of the gentleman from Georgia (Dr. GINGREY) to improve this legislation.

I also want to make an additional point. At times, some have considered

this as being improper legislation. In particular, the President's statement indicates that is the beginning of an industrial policy.

That is simply not true. For those who are critical of this particular proposal, I want to ask them, first of all, do they oppose the current agricultural extension program, which has been in effect for nearly a century, which has been of inestimable value to our farming communities and to our farmers.

No one would think of ending the cooperative extension service in the agriculture department. It has been extremely valuable to this country. I have been in this body for 14 years. I have never heard anyone offer an amendment to defund the cooperative extension program, even though it costs \$400 million a year and benefits less than 2 percent of the workforce in this country.

At the same time, I have met a number of people, and apparently including some in the administration, who want to kill the MEP program, which is only \$100 million a year and benefits industries that employ 14 percent of the workers in this Nation.

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Now, how can it make sense to want to keep a \$400 million program that maintains a workforce of less than 2 million, and kill a program that costs one-fourth as much and helps about eight times as many workers? It doesn't make sense. So that argument is simply out the window.

If we do like the Cooperative Extension Service, we should approve the manufacturing extension partnership, which is of exactly the same nature and is designed to help small- to medium-sized manufacturers develop more jobs in our economy.

Madam Chair, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WU. First, I would like to thank the gentleman from Michigan for his hard work on this legislation. I would further like to thank the gentleman for responding to the factually erroneous statements in the statement of administrative position, and I deeply appreciate the correction for the record.

Madam Chair, I recognize my good friend from New Jersey (Mr. PASCRELL) for 3½ minutes.

Mr. PASCRELL. Madam Chair, I rise in strong support of H.R. 1868, the Technology Innovation and Manufacturing Stimulation Act of 2007, and I wish to congratulate the sponsor of this fine legislation, the chairman of Subcommittee on Technology Innovation, Congressman DAVID WU, and his ranking member, who understandably is not here today, Mr. GINGREY.

I especially am supportive of the provisions of the bill that reauthorize and strengthen the Manufacturing Extension Program. This is very critical. I hope people were listening to Mr. EHLERS, who very cogently spoke and defined what this legislation is all about.